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UNIVERSITY
OF MANITOBA

Department of Pediatrics and Child Health
Faculty of Medicine, University of Manitoba
CE208 - 840 Sherbrook Street
Winnipeg, Manitoba R3A 1S1

May 27, 2012

Dear Parents/Guardians of Southeast Collegiate Student:

On Friday May 4, 2012 Diabetes Awareness Day was held at Southeast Collegiate. There were a series of talks and a number of information booths. At one of these booths, blood sugar testing using a finger poke device was offered to the students as part of a teaching exercise on diabetes by one of the invited speakers, a University of Manitoba professor. The request for blood sampling was made by the organizing committee and this professor agreed to do the testing. This was agreed to on his own initiative, and without the University's knowledge or approval. Approximately 80 children volunteered to have this test performed. Your child may have participated in this blood sugar testing.

The device that was used was a small pen-like tool. The lancet (the needle-like poker) which punctures the skin was changed between every use and the skin was properly cleaned with alcohol. However the device which holds the lancet itself was re-used on each child. This device should not have been re-used as, although the device never comes in contact with a person's skin, it has been shown that there could be a very small amount of blood (microscopic amounts) remaining in the device after a finger poke. If this microscopic amount of blood contained a virus, it is possible but exceptionally unlikely that this virus could be spread to another child tested.

First, the University wants to apologize in advance for any stress or concern this information may cause you, your child, or your family. Second, we want to assure you that the risk of any child contracting an infection as a result of this situation is very low. Please see the accompanying letter from the Medical Officer of Health with information and recommendations regarding testing your child for blood borne viruses, if he or she in fact had a blood sample taken at the Diabetes Awareness Day, and how such testing can be done for your child.

We are extremely sorry that this mistake occurred and I can be reached at 204-87-1970 to discuss this further.

Sincerely yours,

Cheryl Rockman-Greenberg MD, CM
Professor and Head,
Department of Pediatrics and Child Health,
University of Manitoba

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Winnipeg Regional Health Authority
Office régional de la santé de Winnipeg
Caring for Health À l'écoute de notre santé

Population and Public Health Program

490 Hargrave Street
Winnipeg, Manitoba, R3A 0X7

May 28, 2012

Dear parent/guardian of Southeast Collegiate student:

The Population and Public Health Program of the WRHA has been informed of a situation which occurred at the school attended by your child. On May 4, 2012, students attending a health fair at Southeast Collegiate may have had a blood sugar level test in which a lancing device was used by a professor in an unapproved way to obtain finger poke blood samples.

The device used was a small pen-like tool with two parts: the needle - which punctures the skin, and the plastic end cap - which covers the needle. **The needle was changed between every use as it should be**, but the end cap was not changed after every use as it should have been. It is possible that there could have been a very small amount of blood (microscopic amounts) remaining on the end cap after a finger poke. If this tiny amount of blood contained a virus, it is possible but very unlikely that this virus could be spread to another child tested.

Our program wants to reassure you that **the risk of anyone contracting an infection as a result of this situation is very low.** But although the risk is minimal, out of an abundance of caution, we are recommending that your child be tested for hepatitis B, hepatitis C, and the human immunodeficiency virus. Public Health will facilitate this testing for you, if you decide to have your child tested as recommended. This testing applies only to those students or staff who had a finger poke for blood sugar testing at the health fair.

The testing, which will involve obtaining a blood sample, will be offered at no cost by the Public Health nursing team who will come to the school on June 4, 2012 to do the testing. Consent will be required for testing. Approximately one week following the testing, a member of the public health team will meet with each individual student to inform them of their test results. In addition, the public health team will contact you in 6 months time to repeat the same testing. Should testing reveal a positive result, your child will be offered assessment and treatment by a healthcare professional. Please inform Southeast Collegiate at 1-204-251-3551 to let us know whether or not you agree to the testing for your child. If a response is not received by Friday June 1, 2012, Southeast Collegiate will discuss consent to testing with your child.

If you have any further questions, please contact the public health nurse at 1-204-250-8504.

Sincerely,

Dr. Pierre Plourde
Medical Officer of Health
Winnipeg Regional Health Authority

Sheryl McCorrister
Principal/Director
Southeast Collegiate